

active-minded as may be, and as happy as possible about learning; then, even in a short time, they would learn more English than is drummed into them long suffering, when stunned in their immaturity by our present irrational sort of "shake the baby" treatment.

Not long since there was a meeting in the north of this Province at which French teachers spoke strongly in favor of wisdom and a change. The editor of the *St. John Educational Review for the Atlantic Provinces of Canada*, Mr. G. U. Hay, and others on the "English" side, have spoken in sympathy with the cry for help. Here is a letter of an "English" teacher, after experience in a New Brunswick school, where "French" children are suffering. It speaks, and appeals, for itself:

"We teachers wish for proper books. A carpenter cannot work without a saw, nor a mason without the tools of his trade.

"Is the English pupil forced to study geography in French; or even history, in a foreign tongue? The English boy begins to learn French when he goes to the High school, when at least he ought to know something of his own language. The French boy is obliged to learn English as soon as he begins his school work, at five or six years old, and before he has a sufficient vocabulary in his own language to understand English. And so it happens in many cases that the French child leaves school without knowing either language properly; it often happens that such a pupil is obliged to leave school as soon as he has begun to understand just a little English; that is all; and so his school time is wasted. But the French could study history and geography in French and learn English at the same time. I am sure you have remarked that some of the reading books used in the French schools have English written on one page, with French translation opposite. More often than not, the short English word needs a difficult word in French; or one English word needs three French words as equivalent. Hence great confusion for the child translator and beginner. Often the pupil learns the translation by heart, and cannot recognize the same words when met with in another story.

"Don't you think it would be better if the

English and French stories were written in separate books? Then let the pupils translate English into French, or French into English, after having studied the lesson.

"If you asked a French child here where *La mer de France* is, or *La Manche*, I fear you would get no answer. *La Suisse*, *la Tamise*, *le Mexique*, *la mer rouge* would be as Greek to the majority of French pupils. Am I right? Take arithmetic, and you will find the same difficulty; the rules and questions are written in English. Imagine an "English" child trying to do the questions of an arithmetic in French: it makes one laugh even to think of such a thing.

"Suppose that in English schools most of the books were written in French, and the teachers hardly understood French, what would the teachers do? They could speak in their own language, English, to the pupils, but they could not use proper books. *What could they do?* That is the trap French teachers are in. Skilled workmen, perhaps, but no tools for their trade. What could they do?

"A French pupil has a book in hand—about health, say. Look at it: it is in English; but the child does not know English, to understand what he is reading; and, if you wait till this child clearly understands what here is written in the book before him, the child will be old enough indeed.

"Fine logic it is. The English pupils learn their lessons in English, their mother tongue; but the French pupils are forced to study books written, not in French, but in a tongue foreign for them.

"Then why don't you teachers translate for them? We have not the time. And most teachers cannot translate into French. I know three French girls of 14 or 15 (*sic*) teaching in this county. They were in my school at the beginning of this term, and I am quite certain that they cannot translate English into French, for they used to make mistakes in the easiest sentences.

"The French here, it seems to me, have not the courage to fight for their rights. French is not yet a dead language, is it?"

*There* is no theorizing; but experience. How many scores of our New Brunswick children are concerned? How many hundreds? Thousands? Just think. And just feel.

Whether that writer exaggerates as to the ignorance of their mother tongue among the French part of our people, I do not know. A "French" writer in *Le Courrier des*